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population and wealth. These statesmen themselves in their retirement shared the financial afflictions of their people.

But somewhat more, it seems, than the author of this really good volume conveys to the reader these Virginians are to be commended for their high idealism and their actual accomplishment of lasting benefits to this country. The epoch 1800-1824 was a fruitful period despite its tangled maze of experimental diplomacy—fruitful of great results for which in large measure America is indebted to “Jefferson and his Colleagues”.

D. R. ANDERSON.

Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812. Edited, with an Introduction, by WILLIAM WOOD. Volume I. [Publications of the Champlain Society, vol. XIII.] (Toronto: the Society. 1920. Pp. xv, 678, x.)

THE aim of the three volumes, of which this is the first, is to give in full original form the gist of the collection of important British documents relating to the Canadian part of the War of 1812. This collection the Champlain Society now believes to approach completeness for all probable practical purposes. Publication of this volume was delayed two years in order that the harvesting of documents into the Dominion Archives at Ottawa might attain such a degree of finality that further discoveries which would materially change existing evidence would “seem to be almost beyond reasonable expectation”. The editorial work in general and the format of the volume deserve high praise.

In place of an introduction to each document or to each group of documents, a judicious, well-written introduction covers the whole war. It is divided into twelve chapters of from two to thirty-seven pages in length, which occupy the first fifth of the volume and serve to integrate the documents which follow. It is not an easy task to assess and properly document events whose importance, like that of the campaign around Detroit in which the relations with the Indians were deeply involved, was vastly out of proportion to numbers engaged or losses of men and war materials, and in one instance, in a note bordering on disgust, the editor aptly describes the campaign along the Montreal frontier as “the most sprawling and sporadic part of a sprawling and sporadic war” (p. 50).

The documents in this volume relate almost exclusively to conditions and events prior to 1813, and, with the exception of eight, chiefly to the military operations in the West. Unquestionably the most valuable portion is that which deals with the correspondence of the British generals, Brock and Sheafe, with Sir George Prevost, the governor-general and commander-in-chief in Canada. Taken as a whole there is little that is both new and important to a full understanding of the part played by the Canadian forces in the first year of the war, but this fact should not obscure the large and permanent worth of an easily accessible publication

like this to students of history on both sides of the St. Lawrence. Among the significant papers here presented are those devoted to the suspicions of the Canadians regarding the sentiments and movements of the Americans along the frontier, particularly about Niagara; the organization of the militia in Upper Canada; the provincial statute of Lower Canada to facilitate the circulation of army bills; and certain personal observations by two Canadians of Hull and his men at the time of the surrender of Detroit, as revealed in letters and a journal.

An important group of papers shows how insistently the British traders and the Canadian government were cultivating the Indians in the United States, the chief being a confidential communication from Robert Dickson, "residing with the Indians near the Missouri" (1812), in which he quotes the speeches of three chiefs, one a Sioux, who confess that they "have for some time past been amused by the songs of bad Birds from the lower part of the River—they were not the songs of truth". The inclusion of the "historical romance" entitled "The War of the Gulls" (pp. 561-579), and the proclamation of the United States Brigadier-General Smyth to the men of New York, which Henry Adams characterized as unmilitary, surprising, and in the end burlesque, and which has long been quickly accessible in *Niles's Register*, is not easily justified in such a carefully edited and definitive collection as this. Very minor inclusions in the midst of many arid and petty details reveal an unexpected touch of chivalry: the offer of the commander at Ft. George to aid the badly wounded American Colonel van Rensselaer at Lewiston with anything "either useful or agreeable to him", and General van Rensselaer's announcement at Lewiston that he will "order a salute for the funeral of General Brock to be fired here, and at Ft. Niagara, this afternoon" [October 16, 1812] (pp. 625-626).

The chief "find" of the collection is presented at the close of the introduction. It is a "private and confidential" letter of the Duke of Wellington at Paris, in November, 1814, to Lord Bathurst after the disastrous defeat of Prevost at Plattsburg: "I see that the Publick are very impatient about the want of success in America, and I expect they will never be quiet until I shall go there . . . it is too late to think of going to America this year; and I believe I shall not be able to go to Quebec till April. If, however, in March next, you should think it expedient that I shall go there, I beg that you will understand that I have no objection whatever" (p. 131).

KENDRIC C. BABCOCK.

A History of the United States. By EDWARD CHANNING. Volume V. *The Period of Transition, 1815-1848.* (New York: Macmillan Company. 1921. Pp. viii, 623. \$4.50.)

THE author of a "standard history" may call for sympathy as well as admiration. A balanced and a just account is expected by the general